



# ***NEWS RELEASE***

## **PRESS OFFICE**

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**Contact:** Mike Stamler (202) 205-6740  
**Internet Address:** [www.sba.gov/news/](http://www.sba.gov/news/)

### ***SBA, NATIONAL TRUST UNITE TO BOOST SMALL BUSINESSES, MAIN STREET REVITALIZATION***

**WASHINGTON** – A new alliance between the U.S. Small Business Administration (SBA) and the National Trust for Historic Preservation (NTHP) will encourage economic revitalization of local commercial districts in cities and towns across the country, SBA Administrator Aida Alvarez announced today.

Administrator Alvarez signed the agreement in Boston with NTHP President Richard Moe, during NTHP's National Town Meeting on Main Street, where she was a featured speaker.

"This partnership makes perfect sense," Administrator Alvarez said. "Our agendas overlap so much that it's time we work together to adjust our strategies, as well. This is the simple reality: the National Trust's Main Street program is the leading commercial district revitalization program in the country, and the SBA is the nation's leading financial backer of small businesses.

"Frankly, I think it's fair to say that you can't have one without the other," Administrator Alvarez said. "Our programs ought to work together because working together will help small business owners and their communities achieve their goals."

The agreement commits SBA and NTHP to work together over the next six months in one major urban area – Boston – and one largely rural state – Indiana – to determine how best to combine the resources of the two organizations to boost economic growth in local commercial districts.

"We are going to find out which of our resources are the most useful, and we are going to figure out how those resources ought to be deployed," Administrator Alvarez said. "Then we'll have a model that we can share with the rest of the SBA's 70 district offices and the rest of the National Trust's 1,500 Main Street Projects.

"This partnership will combine our resources to build up the small businesses that create jobs, generate economic growth and give stability to our communities. By doing so, we will help preserve the rich assets – the architecture, the personal service and the sense of place – of our Main Streets and our downtowns all across America.

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“This is what the SBA is all about: building communities, one small business at a time.”

The NTHP's Main Street Center is a 20-year-old program designed to help revitalize and restore the historic and traditional commercial districts in communities nationwide. Relying heavily on grass-roots community involvement, the program is in place in 1,500 towns and cities throughout the country, including 19 Main Street neighborhood business districts in Boston.

Local Main Street programs encourage revitalization by providing incentives for historic preservation and rehabilitation, organizing festivals and retail events to bring people back to downtown areas, developing business recruitment strategies and building community consensus on the future of these areas.

SBA, with a portfolio of small business loans amounting to nearly \$50 billion, is the largest single financial backer of small businesses in the country. The agency provides a combination of financing, technical assistance, business development and contracting programs to small businesses to encourage economic growth and job creation.

Besides the pilot program to develop a model on the best way to link the resources of the two organizations in Boston and in Indiana, the partnership includes a number of steps designed to increase local outreach growth to small businesses in Main Street project areas.

The partnership agreement also includes training of local Main Street coordinators on SBA programs and services as well as increasing contacts between Main Street coordinators and SBA field offices and SBA resource partners, such as Small Business Development Centers, Women's Business Centers and Service Corps of Retired Executive chapters.

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*For more information about all of SBA's programs for small businesses, call the SBA Answer Desk at 1-800-U-ASK-SBA, or visit the SBA's extensive Web site at [www.sba.gov](http://www.sba.gov).*

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